

Art – Mrs. Mendes

My third grade students chose a female artist named Sandra Silberzweig. She is a contemporary Canadian artist. She has a rare condition known as "synesthesia". People Diagnosed with this condition, see, hear and taste color! Children growing up with this condition, may not be aware that others do not see or experience the world as they do.

She uses her talents to create tribal-like colorful abstract portraits. Her influences come from many sources. Picasso's art influenced her work most of all. She calls herself The Goddess of Color!

Author Wendy Mass wrote a book called "A mango-shaped space". Wendy Mass, the author, attended Harrison School. It is about an elementary school student who has this condition and fears letting anyone know about it. She thinks they will call her a 'freak'. We read excerpts from this story and it really made this an inspiring lesson for the students. To combine art and literature to teach about an individual overcoming their personal struggles was a great choice to relate to our theme.

Silberzweig learned to make her condition work as a positive and the lesson to our students is that 'one should not be defined by their struggles.'

All of these connections teach students about perseverance and learning to make your unique differences an asset. It was inspiring to learn her story.

